

***City of Burien***

**BURIEN PLANNING COMMISSION**

February 26, 2014

7:00 p.m.

Multipurpose Room/Council Chambers

**MINUTES**

*To hear the Planning Commission's full discussion of a specific topic or the complete meeting, the following resources are available:*

- Watch the video-stream available on the City website, [www.burienwa.gov](http://www.burienwa.gov)
- Check out a DVD of the Council Meeting from the Burien Library
- Order a DVD of the meeting from the City Clerk, (206) 241-4647

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Jim Clingan called the February 26, 2014, meeting of the Burien Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Jim Clingan, Greg Duff, Ray Helms, Butch Henderson, Joey Martinez, Brooks Stanfield

Absent: (one position vacant)

Administrative staff present: David Johanson, senior planner; Brandi Eyerly, planner

**AGENDA CONFIRMATION**

**Direction/Action**

**Motion** was made by Vice Chair Martinez, seconded by Commissioner Henderson, to approve the agenda for the February 26, 2014, meeting. Motion passed 6-0.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Direction/Action**

**Motion** was made by Commissioner Martinez, seconded by Commissioner Stanfield, and passed 6-0 to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2014, meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Marty Kooistra, 1284 SW 164<sup>th</sup> St.,** executive director of the Housing Development Consortium, spoke about what he described as a growing concern in South King County about the preservation of existing housing stock and the need for code enforcement strategies and support strategies from various sources, including nonprofits, to help residents maintain and upgrade their homes. He said neighborhood value comes from the appearance and nature of the housing. He encouraged the commissioners to examine in the Comprehensive Plan how the City, in partnership with other organizations, can emphasize the capacity necessary to help Burien residents maintain a high-quality housing stock which will, in turn, encourage people to move to Burien.

**Sam Pace, 29839 154<sup>th</sup> Ave SE, Kent,** a housing specialist representing Seattle-King County Realtors, presented three documents to the commissioners: the first, a letter to the commissioners transmitting suggestions for updating the housing element; the second, an explanation of the relationships between the Growth Management Act, countywide planning policies, comprehensive plans and development

regulations; and the third, a summary of a panel presentation at the Seattle King County Realtors 19<sup>th</sup> annual housing issues briefing for city council members and candidates in May 2013.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Comprehensive Plan Update: Housing Element, Continuing Discussion**

David Johanson noted that the agenda item is a continuation of the discussion begun at the commission's Feb. 12<sup>th</sup> meeting about the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

He drew the commissioners' attention to the three attachments to his memo in the meeting packet: the housing element from Vision 2040; a description of the trends in household types and sizes in the Puget Sound region, dated December 2012; and an article from the American Planning Association's magazine describing the housing needs/desires of Generation Y, immigrants and senior adults.

He said the commissioners will be looking at Burien's capacity to absorb more housing growth; if greater capacity is needed, where and how will it be accommodated? Mr. Johanson invited the commissioners to continue the discussion they began at their February 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Commissioner Helms expressed his belief that businesses will be attracted to areas where the housing stock is well-maintained, adding that although maintenance is a function of code enforcement rather than zoning, it is still something to be considered and encouraged. He said that although rental units are the current trend, he wondered if new apartments could be constructed at a high enough quality that they could be converted to condominiums when that market re-emerges.

Commissioner Stanfield agreed that the City should not focus on only one trend but work to accommodate all needs while keeping an eye on the community's vision for Burien. He said he agreed with Mr. Pace's statement that the City's policies should support versatility, affordability, diversity and flexibility. He said he was thinking of several different policy areas, based on the commission's discussion thus far: preservation of existing housing stock, zoning and capacity, and versatility.

Commissioner Martinez said he grew up in and around government housing in East Los Angeles and there is nothing in Burien, or being considered for Burien, that is remotely similar to that, despite the fears voiced by some people in the community.

Commissioner Henderson asked how, with current zoning, the City can transition to accommodate all the various housing needs/desires. Mr. Johanson replied that the City is required to plan out to 2035. He said the early indication is that Town Square will provide greater capacity than previously anticipated and that, combined with a few other projects in the pipeline and credit for units recently constructed, puts the City's number at approximately 30 units greater than its target number. He said the vacant and underutilized land in the city is zoned approximately one-third single family, one-third multifamily and one third mixed use, which is a good mix, but there is no guarantee the market will build exactly that.

Commissioner Duff said he believes that as Seattle reaches maximum capacity companies will look outside of the city to site their medical research and Amazon and Google-type offices. He said the vacant land adjacent to the airport, in other cities, will become prime land, but the housing that will feed those businesses could be in Burien.

Commissioner Stanfield asked if there is room in the zoning code to increase flexibility to accommodate a greater mix of housing types. Mr. Johanson responded that there is opportunity to allow different products than what are currently allowed, citing cottage housing as an example. He added that it might be time to make adjustments to the Zoning Code to achieve better density yields. He asked the commissioners if they

are comfortable with Burien's projected yield being only 30 units above its assigned target, which doesn't allow much room for error.

Commissioner Helms asked if the commission should be thinking of things like the impact of increased density on the school district as they consider changes to the housing element. Mr. Johanson explained that the school district also takes into consideration projected growth figures as it does its own forecasting and planning, so the commissioners don't necessarily need to consider it. He noted that growth is dictated by the market, so there is an element of uncertainty.

## **PLANNING COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS**

Commissioner Stanfield said he had read an article from the Seattle Bike Blog reporting on the findings of a study done by a researcher who had strapped air monitoring equipment to himself to gather pollution data while riding his bicycle around Seattle. The research question was whether riders are exposing themselves to toxic fumes while riding their bikes in traffic. He said the data showed that riders are exposed to the greatest amounts of pollution in areas of congested traffic, for instance in the University District and crossing the Fremont Bridge. The degree of exposure was greatly reduced where the bike path was separated from traffic by as little as 10 feet, he said. He noted that when the Burien did its Transportation Master Plan a lot of the heavy bike/pedestrian use was separated from heavy traffic by as much as a block, which now may provide an additional benefit to those users.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Johanson announced that there is a public open house with the candidates for the city manager job on Friday, Feb. 28<sup>th</sup>, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the community center.

He also said the interviews for the four Planning Commission positions open for appointment this year will take place on March 31<sup>st</sup>.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **Direction/Action**

Commissioner Martinez moved for adjournment; seconded by Commissioner Henderson. Motion carried 6-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

**APPROVED:** March 12, 2014

/s/ Jim Clingan, chair  
Planning Commission